**“On Dumpster Diving” by Lars Eighner**

**Vocabulary**

Bohemian

Niche

Dilettanti

Camp (Look at the context of the word in paragraph 65)

Amorphous

Sinecure

Transience

Dualist (paragraph 76)

Polemical

Didactic

**Questions for Analysis**

1. Why might Eighner have chosen to begin his essay with a discussion of the word “Dumpster”?
2. Paragraph 3

Discuss the effect of this single simple sentence on the reader.

1. Paragraph 4-5

In these paragraphs, Eighner examines his own diction. What impression does the word “scavenger” give to the reader? Why do you think he chose to title his essay “On Dumpster Diving”?

1. Look at the following sections of his essay. If you could title each section with an appropriate heading, what would they be?

Paragraphs 1-7:

Paragraphs 8-37:

Paragraphs 38-58:

Paragraphs 59-65:

Paragraphs 66-69:

Paragraphs 70-72:

Paragraphs 73-80:

1. How would you describe Eighner’s feelings toward each population? Give a quote from the text for each that gives the reader these impressions.

Other Dumpster divers:

Text Evidence:

College students:

Text Evidence:

Middle class homeowners:

Text Evidence:

Animals:

Text Evidence:

Can scroungers:

Text Evidence:

1. Summarize Eighner’s analysis of the practical stages through which a beginning Dumpster diver goes. What does his analysis tell us about the larger experience of having to scavenge for food?
2. Several images in Eighner’s essay are particularly striking to the reader. Describe two examples of such images and their effects.

A.

B.

1. Describe Eighner’s tone through the beginning of the essay. How does this differ from the ending? Where does this shift occur?
2. What is Eighner’s purpose in writing this essay?
3. Describing Eighner’s style-

Diction:

Syntax:

Point of View:

1. Choose two instances in the essay in which Eighner uses humorous statements. Describe the effect of these sentences.

A.

B.

12. Examine paragraph 41. How is parallel syntax used? What is the overall effect of these sentences?

13. Summarize the two lessons Eighner has learned through his lifestyle.

14. Describe the effect of the figurative language used in paragraph 75.

15. Examine the last sentence of paragraph 79. *“Between us are the rat-race millions who have confounded their selves with the objects they grasp and who nightly scavenge the cable channels looking for they know not what.”*

What are some examples of Eighner’s use of diction, and what impressions do these give to the reader?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Example of Diction** | **Your Commentary** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |